

California GARDEN

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1995

Volume 86 No. 6

\$1.50



HORTICULTURAL CALENDAR

NOV. 4-5

LAKE HODGES NATIVE PLANT CLUB, INC. 11th Annual Plant Sale. Vons Market, The Plaza, Bernardo Center Dr. Sat. 9AM-4PM; Sun. 9AM-2PM. Unusual native plants.

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANIC GARDEN 17th Annual Plant Sale. 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont (near Pomona). Call 909/625-8767. Sat. 11AM-4PM; SUN. 9am-1PM.

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN FOUNDATION, INC. Chrysanthemum Show & Sale. 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula. Sat. & Sun. 9AM-4PM. Call 310/544-1948. \$5.

NOV. 7th, 14th & 21st

★**SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION** American Contemporary Holiday Flower Arranging. Casa del Prado, Rm 104, Balboa Park. V. West, instructor. Tues. 9:30AM-2:30PM. RSVP 232-5762. Series of three \$40.

NOV. 15

THE ARBORETUM of Los Angeles County Holiday Arrangements. Lecture & Demonstration by Rene Van Rems. Wed. 10AM to noon & Hands-on workshop 1-3PM. Call for information 818/447-8207.

NOV. 19

SUMI-E PAINTING AND IKEBANA 20th Annual Show. Casa del Prado, Majorca Room, Balboa Park. Sun. 11AM-4PM. Free.

DEC. 1

★**SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION** "Holidays in the 21st Century" Preview Tea. Casa del Prado, Majorca Room, Balboa Park. For members and friends. Fri. 3-5PM. 232-5762.

DEC. 1-2

★**SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION** "Holidays in the 21st Century" Holiday Show. Casa del Prado, Majorca Room, Balboa Park. Fri. 5-9PM.; Sat. Noon-9PM. Free.

DEC. 2-3

BANNING RESIDENCE MUSEUM 10th Annual Victorian Christmas Display & Celebration. Wilmington, CA. Sat. & Sun. 10AM-3PM. Call 310/548-7777. Admission fee.

DEC. 2-10

DESCANSO GARDENS "The Magic of Christmas" Annual Christmas Show at Manchester Boddy Historical House. 1418 Descanso Dr., La Canada-Flintridge. 9AM-5PM daily. Call 818/952-4401. \$5.

DEC. 5

LA JOLLA GARDEN CLUB Holiday Tea & Bazaar. St. James Hall, 7776 Eads, La Jolla. Tues. 12:30-3:30PM. Call 454-4109. \$7.50.

DEC. 5-10

FULLERTON ARBORETUM Heritage House Victorian Christmas Tour. 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton. Docent tours. Call for information 714/773-3404. \$2.

DEC. 7

QUAIL BOTANICAL GARDENS Workshop Succulent Wreath. 230 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas. Thur. 10AM-2PM. 436-3036. \$55.

DEC. 12

★**SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION** Bus Tour. Holiday decorated Adamson House & Gardens, Malibu. \$32 members, \$35 nonmember. Call 232-5762.

Weekly

SAN DIEGO JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP GARDEN Docent Tours Balboa Park by Organ Pavilion. Tues., Fri., Sat., Sun. 10AM-4PM. Gate donation. Free 3rd. Tues.

Every Saturday

OFFSHOOT TOURS One-Hour Plant Walks in Balboa Park. Meet 10AM. Botanical Lath House. Canceled if rain or less than 4 attendees. 1st Sat. History Walk; 2nd Sat. Palm Walk; 3rd Sat. Tree Walk; 4th Sat. Desert Walk; 5th Sat. Tour del Dia.

Every Tuesday

BALBOA PARK INTERPRETIVE WALKS Ranger guided tours of Botanical History of Park. Meet Balboa Park Visitor Center, Plaza de Panama. 10AM. Call 619/235-1121. Free.

Monthly

SAN DIEGO HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY Speaker. 2nd Mon. 6:30-9PM. Call 630-7307.

Month of DEC.

THE ARBORETUM of Los Angeles County "Holiday in the Garden" Call 818/447-8207.

Oct. 95 thru May 96

PALOMAR DISTRICT DESIGN FORUM Floral Design Programs. 1st Mon. 1-3PM. Rancho Bernardo. Call 749-1920. Fee.

Deadline for submission to

HORTICULTURAL CALENDAR for Jan./Feb. issue is Nov. 15. **SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION** is not responsible for changes that are submitted late by the organizations.



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Front cover of poinsettia and back cover of English holly by ILSE SCHEER

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DWARF LADY PALM

by BARBARA S. JONES

FAN-SHAPED MINIATURE PALMS, *Rhapis excelsa*, often called dwarf lady palms, are becoming a valued house plant because they are attractive and thrive with little care indoors. These fan-shaped, 18 to 32 inch tall palms are a variety of the familiar *rhapis* palms that top at 8 to 15 feet. The miniatures are native to China, Vietnam and Thailand. They are available in the familiar solid green but there are over one hundred named cultivars that are variegated with cream-colored stripes. They are often grown as bonsai.

These are not new plants and have been grown in Japan since the seventeenth century. The larger varieties have been popular since the 1850s in the United States but the miniatures were first introduced in the 1970s. These tiny palms, which prefer low light and need to be watered weekly, are popular here. The plants cannot be mass-produced because seeds are short in supply and are not always reliable. Most of the locally available plants are offsets that have taken at least five years to attain a marketable size.

If you would like to try growing a miniature palm, local growers suggest *R. excelsa* 'Koban' as a good first-time plant. Young, green plants are usually less expensive than mature plants or variegated varieties. Southern California prices range from \$25 to several hundred. Pricey but nice. □

Barbara Jones has been gardening inside and outside in San Diego for over sixty years.



Rhapis - Lady Palm

Betty Newton photo

Silver -

TO EMPHASIZE A PLANT or path or accentuate a particular color scheme, consider using silver plants in the garden design. Many nurseries now carry a wider variety of silver-leaved plants besides the more commonly used—but effectual—dusty miller. Numerous herbs flaunt silver foliage, particularly in the genus *Artemisia*. Though more commonly called such ignoble names as mugwort and wormwood, which hardly sound like charming additions to the ornamental garden (one raises visions of an assault and the other of some morbid disease), there are nonetheless a few varieties that are desirable garden additions. *Artemisia absinthium* and *A. ludoviciana* are two that are particularly rewarding.

A. absinthium is the most shrub-like of the three. It's an immigrant from Europe, where it was widely used for medicinal purposes, generally externally, as it is also a poison. There is one well-known exception to its being used exclusively externally: During the nineteenth century this herb was used to make the liqueur absinthe. It became very popular until it was discovered that the imbibing of absinthe resulted in a poisoning of the nervous system. In the early 1900s absinthe was made illegal in many countries, including the U.S.

As an ornamental, however, absinthium is quite the ticket. It can grow from 2-4 feet high and just as wide, but responds to pruning. Both the leaves and stems are covered with downy hairs that give the shrub a delicate chalky appearance that contrasts nicely with the greens of other plants in the garden. Tiny greenish-yellow flowers appear in the fall. As with many of the genus *Artemisia*, the flowers are a favorite of those who do crafts. Once cut and dried, the flowers are a superlative foundation for wreaths and swags.

A. ludoviciana 'Silver King' is neither shrubby nor woody. The stems are quite airy and pliable, with thin, elongated silvery leaves. This is a perennial that needs room, however. Being rhizomatous, it spreads. (I had to remove it from one area where it was becoming a nuisance and replant it in a less congested place.) Still, if you have the room and need a spreader, this one's for you. It is an especially pleasant contrast plant. The flowers, again, are inconsequential except as dried specimens for floral crafts, where they excel.

Plectranthus argentatus is a relatively new import from Australia, not Argentina as the name might suggest. ▶

The Polishing Touch

by CATHERINE L. ZINSKI

In this instance the etymology of "argentatus" originates from the word "argent," meaning silver. How very appropriate! *P. argentatus* veritably shimmers in silver, with an ever-so-slight hint of violet about it. This is a small shrub-like perennial (2' x 3') that is very similar to the *Coleus* species in its needs and care. Partial shade is best. Pinching is required to establish compactness, else *P. argentatus* can become leggy. It does flower in the fall, but is more desirable for its foliage and the rich effect it can produce in the garden.

Many gardeners are familiar with *Tradescantia albiflora* better known as wandering Jew. Few, however, are acquainted with its silver cousin, *T. sillamontana*. The leaves of *T. sillamontana* are quite hirsute, meaning they are covered with cilia, or hair. It's this white fuzz that produces its silvery cast. Tiny purple flowers can appear in late summer to further accentuate its loveliness.

T. sillamontana is best displayed as a hanging plant, though some may consider using it as a ground cover in partial-to-fully shaded areas. The only drawback here is *T. sillamontana's* habit of going dormant during the winter months. The care of this furry little fellow is simple. *T.*



Artemisia absinthium - Photos by the author.

sillamontana is not particular. Most soils are adequate. Regular watering is sufficient and pinching or pruning is unnecessary until dormancy is established, then the dead matter should be removed. Propagation is best through division.

Silver plants are subtle and quiet, while lending a fluidity to the perennial bed. They produce a calming effect while paradoxically accentuating the garden. This is especially vivid under a full moon, where silver plants positively glow, like lightning bugs.

Most nurseries carry a sampling of silver-leaved plants. For the more difficult to find, check with Walter Andersen Nursery in San Diego or Buena Creek Nursery in San Marcos. Good luck and happy gardening! □

Catherine L. Zinski is a free-lance writer for garden and canine publications.



Tradescantia sillamontana

TAKING BETTER GARDEN PICTURES

by BETTY NEWTON

THERE IS A WAY you can save the garden you've created at the height of its beauty or preserve one exquisite blossom—with pictures. You may know that gardens are difficult to photograph. Your photographs may improve as a result of these admonitions.

I know that a single lens reflex camera, with which you can see the actual edges of your photograph as you focus, is the only kind of camera you can use to perfectly control composition. There are many good SLR brands available. However, if you keep your subject inside the guidelines shown in the viewfinder of less expensive cameras, you'll get most of the beauty. Composition can be improved later by cropping the edges.

ONLY SHARP PICTURES ARE GOOD ENOUGH

1. *Use a camera made in the last ten years.* Even the new cardboard cameras can do the job. The compact point and shoot cameras can be satisfactory. Or, use a fine old lens that is spotless.

2. *Hold the camera steady.* Take a deep breath and hold the camera close to you and snug while pressing the shutter. When you can control the shutter speed, don't take photos at less than 1/30th of a second.

3. *Use faster film.* Film has improved tremendously. Unless you are making big enlargements, 100, 200, even 400 speeds are fine. A 200 ASA film, if held steady, will take a sharp picture of even windblown flowers.

4. *Don't get closer than your camera can focus.* We love closeups, but most point and shoot and cardboard cameras must be four feet from the subject for a sharp picture. If you have a macro or close-up lens or less expensive extender rings, go ahead and get as close as your equipment permits.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

1. *Clear the background.* No cars, telephone poles, weeds, other plants, or hosebibs. This is difficult.

2. *Change your angle.* Hold the plants to the sky (especially the northern sky), or put them on the back of a clean automobile and photograph so you can't tell where they are.

3. *Drape an unwrinkled cloth or place an unspotted cardboard in the background—covering all the background.*

AVOID HARSH SHADOWS AND REFLECTED LIGHT

Film cannot yet capture the detail the eye can see simultaneously in dark shade and full sun. You have to moderate the differences.

1. *Take photos when light is good but shadows have soft edges.* Bright, overcast days give wonderful pictures because reflection is cut.

2. *Use a sheer curtain to shade your subject lightly in the middle of a bright day.* Have a friend hold it. This will reduce reflecting light and avoid a washed-out photo.

3. *Cut reflection by using a polarizer lens and turning it until you see a darker sky* (cost about \$15.00).

4. *Take splendid pictures in light shade.* Color is more vivid in the shade.

5. *Don't take pictures in lath houses;* stripes will show.

6. *Put cardboard backdrops back far enough* so no shadows show.

SHOW CLEAR STRUCTURE TO MAKE THE FLOWERS STAND OUT

A path, bench, gazebo, wall, or bridge will bring the garden picture to life. In close-ups, a rock or brick edging helps.

PHOTOGRAPH GARDEN SCENES LOOKING DOWN FROM A STOOL OR LADDER LIGHT MATTERS

1. *To emphasize the shape and texture of seed capsules, petals, plants, or trees, photograph when the sun is low*—shortly after dawn or in very late afternoon.

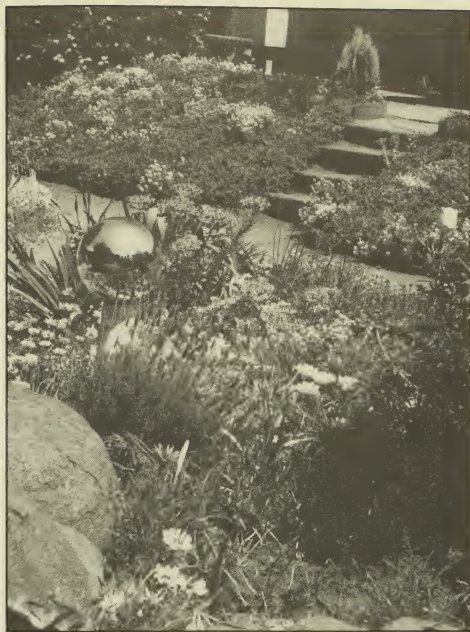
2. *If you have a subject in front of a light background* (like the sky) and it only takes up 25% of the space, because cameras average the light, your subject will appear much too dark. Solution? Move in closer or change your angle.

HORIZONS SHOULD NOT BE IN THE MIDDLE

I just tried to choose pictures to go with this article and found how far short of these standards most of them fall. Last guideline: *forgive yourself and keep trying.* □

Betty Newton teaches gardening classes at Grossmont Adult Schools and writes for the Sunday San Diego Union-Tribune. Photographs by the author.

California Garden welcomes photos of Southern California garden scenes and plants. Put your name, address and identity of the subject on the back of the photo. Please enclose a description of your subject. This magazine is published by volunteers and no fees are paid.



Linda Bangsburg's garden photographs well when structural elements are shown—stairs, path, and globe.



'Lavender Dream' shrub rose, background simplified

RUST ON ZONAL PELARGONIUMS

by CAROL ROLLER

PUCCINIA PELARGONII-ZONALIS, zonal pelargonium rust, is a fairly new disease. It is a fungus that was discovered in South Africa, the native habitat of *Pelargonium zonale* and *P. inquinans*. These two wildflowers are the primary ancestors of the *P. xhortorum*. This is the collective name for zonal pelargoniums although they are often, and wrongly, called geraniums. The "x" indicates that we are referring to an assortment of related plants that originated in cultivation, plants that are not naturally occurring. Other hybrid types of *Pelargonium*, including ivy leaves, scented, and regals, are resistant to the parasitic rust organism. Ivies and zonals are genetically compatible. Those hybrids that physically resemble zonals are probably vulnerable to rust. There are several hundred species of *Pelargonium*, most of which are native to southern Africa. With the exception of *P. zonale* and *P. inquinans*, they are not affected by rust. Plants of the genus *Geranium* are also immune.

The genus *Puccinia* was established in 1794 by a scientist named Christian Hendrick Persoon (1755-1837). In 1818 he wrote that fungi grew from spores, but the various stages of their reproduction were not fully understood at that time. *Puccinia* organisms have a particular manner of propagating themselves and this distinguishes them from other genera. Many *Puccinia* species exist and each exhibits itself as rust on specific plants. Some rusts require alternate hosts in order to complete their life cycles. *Puccinia graminis*, the black stem rust of grasses and grains, is one of these. It lives on barberry (*Berberis*) or *Mahonia* at one stage in its development and on wheat during a second phase. A major advance in the control of this rust was the mandatory elimination of the alternate host plants in areas where grain is grown.

Puccinia pelargonii-zonalis was first reported in the United States in 1967 and is now found wherever zonals are of horticultural importance. There were some published reports that *Hedera helix*, English ivy, served as the alternate host for zonal rust. We now know that this is untrue. Zonal rust only uses a single host, the zonal pelargonium, and it requires only an asexual phase in order to reproduce. This simplifies its life cycle, but makes zonal rust difficult to control.

The spores travel in the air and settle on leaf surfaces. When moisture touches the spores, they germinate and invade the plant tissue. A zonal will exhibit symptoms of its disease within a few days after contact

(continued on page 180)

OLD GARDEN ROSES (Part II)

BY DUSTY CRAIG

THE FOLLOWING IS a partial listing of the old garden roses grown in my Poway garden. The reference to "Dowager" or "Victorian" class refers to showing them in American Rose Society sanctioned rose shows. Dowagers are varieties introduced before 1867; Victorians between 1867 and 1930. The year of introduction of the first hybrid tea, 'La France,' was 1867.

'BARON GIROD DE L'AIN': Hybrid perpetual, 1897, Victorian class. 6' X 4'. It has the worst foliage but has interesting blooms—when it blooms, that is. Light-green, matte foliage rusts, mildews and blackspots badly when new growth is mature, then the scrawny canes lose all foliage for awhile until the cycle starts again. The semi-double bloom is bright velvety-red with a thin deckle edging of white—very unusual. Light fragrance. Responds well to pegging. Intermittent season-long bloom. Takes about four seasons to become established. Mine keeps trying to die, and I keep trying to encourage it to do so, but thus far it is still barely clinging to life. Few hips.

'BLANC DOUBLE DE COUBERT': Hybrid rugosa, 1892, Victorian class. 4' X 3'. Typically rugose foliage of clean, bright medium green. VERY prickly with short, branching canes. Loosely double blooms of the purest white with golden stamens. Good fragrance. Old blooms are a muddy coffee color—the one real drawback to this outstanding specimen. Good all

season bloom with biggest flush in the late spring. Drought tolerant and disease free. Doesn't appreciate heavy feeding nor does it care for foliar feeding. Becomes gaunt and dead looking in the winter, very typical rugosa. Blooms on old wood, so deadheading, careful deadwood removal, and very light shaping is all that is needed. Becomes well established its first season after planting. Does not appear to set hips.

'BLUSH NOISETTE': Noisette, prior to 1817, Dowager class. 8'+ X 6'. Wonderful, versatile plant that lends itself to a variety of uses. Long, flexible canes respond incredibly well to pegging and espaliering, but also can be used as a free standing, weeping shrub allowed to ramble over a bank, low wall, or fence. Huge trusses of fragrant, small, semi-double blooms start as a pink bud and open to a blush-white bloom. Dainty mid-green foliage is disease free. Moderately thorny. Huge flush of bloom in the mid-spring, followed by intermittent flowers throughout the season. Deadheading and dead wood removal is

done after the bloom season is done in late November. Some light shaping also can be done at this time. Takes about three seasons to reach peak potential. Sets a good crop of tiny orange hips.

'BUFF BEAUTY': Hybrid musk, 1939, shrub or misc. class. 6' X 3'. Elegant, classy bush with glossy, dark-green foliage, hybrid tea-shaped double blooms of rich apricot-buff that are lightly fragrant. Disease free, semi-drought and shade tolerant. Moderately thorny. Pegs well. Good bloom in mid-spring, with all season intermittent bloom. Light shaping, deadheading, and deadwood removal are the only things needed to keep the plant neat and tidy. Takes about two seasons to become established. Sets a good crop of hips.



'Baron Girod de l'Ain' 1897

'CATHERINE MERMET': Tea, 1869, Victorian class. 3' X 3'. Outstanding rose for the small garden, and superb pot subject. Loves the heat of inland North County. Fully double blooms of the classic hybrid tea shape are a delicate shell-pink fading to ivory-white on the outer petals with a dreamy, delicate tea fragrance. Long stems are clothed in dark, matte-green foliage that can mildew a bit. Weak necks are common—try extra ammonium sulfate once a week to prevent that from happening. Few thorns. Good all season bloom with sprays and singles. Prune as you would a modern hybrid tea, concentrating on saving the strongest canes even if it means cutting to nearly ground level to find a good, strong eye. Takes

two seasons to become fully established. Sets few hips.

'CLIMBING BLOOMFIELD DAINTY': Hybrid musk, 1924, shrub or Victorian class. 3' X 3'. Can reach 7'+ with good spread. Likes the shade, and like most of its class, it is semi-drought tolerant and disease free. Mid-green foliage sets off the single, deep-yellow petals etched with orange-red on the edges. Fades to a lovely light lemon-yellow. Light, citrusy fragrance. Good all season bloom, tending toward larger sprays later in the season. Light shaping, deadheading, and deadwood removal recommended. Takes about four seasons to become fully established. Sets a good crop of hips.

'CLIMBING CECILE BRUNNER': Climbing polyantha, 1894, Victorian class and polyantha class. 20'+ X 10'+. A glorious sweetheart rose much beloved both yesteryear and today. Extremely vigorous and spreads like the space shuttle taking orbit, so give it plenty of room. Very versatile—can be trained any way that you like. My personal specimen is

approximately eighty years old, removed from an old house in Porterville, California several years ago. In the windstorm of May 1994, it blew down and took the fence with it, which made it necessary to cut it back to about 3' high, nearly breaking my heart in the process. One year later it is nearly back to its original size of 20' + and blooming like it has in the past. And bloom it does. In the first bloom cycle in the mid-spring, it stops traffic on our street and draws people from all over the country to view its magnificent show. Tiny hybrid tea shaped pink blooms with a yellow base smother the clean, disease free dark green foliage with huge sprays of ten to twenty blooms that have a light fragrance. Has nasty hooked thorns that will reach out and grab you when you least expect it. Deadwood removal is all I dare do to it—I don't water or feed it for fear it will swallow the fence, yard and neighbour's house! No hips.

'CORNELIA': Hybrid musk, 1925, Victorian or shrub class.

2' X 5'. A large, spreading bush very useful on banks or over low walls and fences. Dark-green, disease-free foliage, very dense. Two inch semi-double blooms of bright pink with golden undertones and golden stamens fade to blush pink and come in large sprays of 10-20 blooms. Very fragrant. Semi-drought and shade tolerant. Exuberant bloom in the spring, with some bloom always on the plant. Takes about two seasons to become well established. Deadhead if you don't want a huge crop of lovely apple-green hips that age to a salmon-pink when ripe.

'ERFURT': Hybrid musk, 1939, shrub or misc class. 3'. If you like flashy single roses, you'll love this one. Neon magenta edges on ice-white petals surround the yellow stamens on this nicely fragrant bloom. Responds well to pegging and espaliering. Mid-green disease free foliage, few thorns. Blooms well throughout the season right into January if you let it. Deadhead and deadwood removal recommended. Takes about three seasons to become established. Sets a good crop of hips.

'FELICITE PARMENTIER': Alba, 1834, Dowager class. 3' X 3'. When God designed the rose to be the most beautiful, beloved flower on earth, this is the model He used. Words fail to describe the perfection that is Felicite Parmentier—I can only imagine she was the loveliest woman on the face of the earth when this rose was named for her, and I am envious. Blush-white outer petals surround a rosy-pink centre swirl of petals exuding a fragrance that makes one think of summer evenings

in an arbor surrounded by roses, jasmine and honeysuckle. Light, matte-grey-green foliage is disease free. Canes are pliable and very thorny. Somewhat drought- and shade tolerant. Great pot plant. Once blooming, but not stingy with the amount of bloom. If you make potpourri, you need this rose. Heck, you need this rose whether or not you make potpourri! Deadwood removal and extremely light shaping recommended. Takes about four seasons to become fully established. Sets some hips.

'FERDINAND PICHARD': Hybrid perpetual, 1921, Victorian class. 6' X 5'. A show stopper! Big, bright-green foliage and some thorns on a lax bush that responds incredibly well to being pegged. Some mildew noted. Semi-double blooms of white-striped, streaked and splashed carmine pink and red with bright yellow stamens and a good, spicy fragrance. Great spring bloom with some bloom on the plant all season. Deadwood removal and deadheading highly recommended. Takes about

three seasons to become established. Can set hips.

'FRAU DAGMAR HARTOPP (FRU DAGMARHASTRUP)': Hybrid rugosa, 1914, Victorian class. 3' X 3'. Typical rugosa in that it tolerates drought and salt air, is disease free, and looks dead in the winter. Very prickly with short, branching canes in the rugosa manner. Lovely, delicate looking petals of transparent light-pink come five to a bloom that is about 5" in size with cream-coloured stamens. Light rose fragrance. Mid-green foliage. Blooms well all season. Establishes itself first season. Blooms on old wood, so be careful how you remove deadwood and shape. Sets few hips.

'HONORINE DE

BRABANT': Bourbon, unknown date of introduction, Victorian class, 5' x 8'. Big, blowsy, spreading plant that looks jolly even without the addition of the 4" double white blooms striped and splashed light cerise-pink. Light scent. Light-green foliage that is disease free. Long arching canes respond extremely well to pegging or let it fountain over as a freestanding shrub. Few thorns. Good all season bloom with best show in late spring. Establishes quickly. Removal of deadwood and deadheading recommended. Sets a fair crop of hips.

Dusty Craig has been growing roses since moving into the Poway area in 1985. In November of 1994, she became a fully accredited horticultural judge for the American Rose Society.

Photographs by Dale Craig.



'Blanc Double de Coubert' 1892

MORE CARROTS, PLEASE!

BY CHRIS HUTTO

"EAT YOUR CARROTS," is a familiar parental command. We have all refused to eat them when they were overcooked, canned, or frozen. But when carrots are fresh, sweet, finger-sized roots that have been planted, watered, and harvested by you; we are likely to hear, "More carrots, please."

Let carrots grow to their mature size, i.e., from 1/2 inch in diameter on up, depending on variety. They reach their peak of flavor and carotene content when they are fully mature. The orange color deepens as the vitamin A increases. Carrots keep well in the ground, just make sure the soil is well drained. Pull them as you need them.

They store well in a brown bag in the refrigerator. Cut the tops off first as they pull the moisture out of the roots. Do not store apples and carrots together. Apples give off a gas that will give the carrots a bitter taste.

Soil preparation: Possibly the single most important thing you can do to gain success in growing carrots is preparing the soil properly. Carrots are very sensitive. They grow straight until they hit the least obstruction; then they make a short turn or fork or grow misshapen. Work layers of shredded leaves, old straw, rotted manure, garden and kitchen refuse into your garden space. Keep this damp. Two weeks before planting time apply an all-purpose fertilizer to the growing area. Work this well into the soil and water well.

Seed planting: Carrot seeds are slow to germinate. Try pre-sprouting the seeds between layers of paper toweling. Working with two, three-foot sections of towels, make a wide-row "seed tape." Place the seeds an even inch apart completely covering a lightly dampened three-foot section of towels. Cover the seeds with a top layer of paper towels the same length. Mist each seed tape so that both layers are evenly moist. Roll them up and place each in its own labeled plastic bag in the refrigerator. After six days seed coats begin to soften and swell. They are ready to plant out in the garden.

Planting is easy. Unroll each length of toweling directly on top of the prepared soil. Cover the seed tape with 1/2 inch of equal parts sphagnum peat moss, vermiculite, and soil. Water thoroughly. Check to make sure the paper toweling is still covered with soil. Mesh shading material laid over the seed beds will help maintain moisture.

Watering: Consistent watering is important throughout the growing season. With a daily watering, small carrots will begin pushing through the soil in five to seven days. Remove the mesh cover when seedlings emerge. Once the carrots are up, use a liquid fertilizer every two weeks. If carrots dry out while growing, their

flesh hardens; then when water is restored their roots tend to split. There is one watering trick you can use to encourage long slender carrots. When the little plants reach about 1 inch tall, withhold water until they start to wilt. This forces the roots to grow deeper. Resume normal watering. You do this only once.

Harvesting: Harvesting actually starts with thinning. Nothing is as tasty as miniature carrots from your own garden. Try chopping tops and all and then add to a tossed green salad for a fresh surprise. Keep thinning until carrots are about 2 inches apart. Harvest when they reach your favorite eating size. Keep a bucket of water close by; wash the dirt off before you take them inside. Return the muddy water to the garden instead of pouring it down the drain.

There are over eighty varieties of carrots. Many of them are hybrid varieties. For long rooted carrots, up to eight inches, try 'Amstel,' which is sweet flavored, long rooted, and has blunt tips. For a medium rooted one, try 'Tangy Caramba.' 'Imperial Chantenay' is a good, short, stocky, and mild tasting carrot.

It is neither pride nor imagination that make your home-grown carrots taste better than the store bought ones. When you grow your own, your family will always say, "More carrots, please!" □

Reprinted from the July-August 1989 issue of Golden Gardens by permission of California Garden Clubs, Inc.

A HALF-BARREL OF CARROTS

BY BARBARA S. JONES

CARROTS CAN BE GROWN year-round in a half-barrel-size container. Now is a good time to plant them in Southern California. Before you add the soil to your container, be sure you place it in an area where it will get a minimum of six hours of sunlight a day. Pour in a bag of commercial potting soil (about 2 cubic feet) and mix in some time-release fertilizer. (Follow directions on the label.) Water well. Sprinkle the seeds over the soil and cover with a very thin layer of the potting soil. Press the seeds down with the flat of your hand or a trowel. Gently sprinkle with water. It is important that the seeds are kept moist until the seedlings appear. Drainage is important. Be careful that water does not collect in a saucer beneath the container. Many gardeners recommend covering the

ground with burlap until the seedlings appear—about a week. (The water will go through the burlap and will help to retain the moisture.)

If you have birds in the garden, cover the barrel with a coarse mesh because some birds learn to scratch out seeds. Be brave, seedlings should be thinned to stand about an inch apart. The soil should not be allowed to dry out, so this means it will need to be watered every two to three days. During the growing period the carrots can be fed monthly with a balanced liquid fertilizer.

Nothing tastes better than a fresh-pulled carrot. Use the carrots as you need them and when they all are gone, mix in some more time-release fertilizer and start the process over.

There are lots of carrots to choose from. Many of the new varieties have been developed to produce larger amounts of beta carotene, the body converts it into vitamin A. Look at the seed catalog or in your nursery and try several kinds until you find one that particularly pleases you.

Growing carrots in a container is a fun and easy thing for a child to do. Even the grown-ups will enjoy this relatively weed- and stoop-free vegetable gardening. □

GARDENING FOR GOOD HEALTH AND GOOD TASTE

BY ROBERT D. HORWITZ

ONE OF THE BEST things about growing vegetables is that you get a delicious return on your labor investment. This season I encourage you to get into vegetable gardening. Almost every limitation can be overcome. No yard? Start a windowsill garden with herbs, which are virtually indestructible. The health benefits come both from the exercise you get in preparing the soil, planting and harvesting, and from knowing that what you grow is nutritious and free of pesticides.

GARDENING AS EXERCISE

Although gardening is a fairly benign exercise, it has the benefit of making use of your entire body. You will kneel, stand, stoop, stretch, pinch, cut, and use both large and small muscle groups that may otherwise be ignored.

If you feel pain two hours after performing a gardening activity, that is a signal that you've overdone it and should cut back on the amount and/or intensity of garden chores.

There are a number of catalogs that cater to dedicated gardeners with such things as a kneeling cart on wheels so you don't have to stoop and stand continually. A raised-bed garden (accomplished either by building a retaining wall to the desired height or by putting an 8- to 12-inch deep wooden box up on sawhorses) also will allow you to work with minimal stooping.

Other helpful tools include shears and blades with special handles. If you suffer from arthritis and these allow you to continue gardening, by all means, buy them. Otherwise, don't conserve energy; instead, make your efforts count. Really stretch for that tool, for example, and bend and lift (using proper form: knees bent, back straight) as much as possible.

APARTMENT GARDENING

Apartment dwellers have an alternative to the local farmers' market. If you have a balcony, you have quite a bit of room to practice the art of container gardening. Most vegetables do well in containers, which can be as small as 8 inches deep by 8 inches in diameter—check seed packages for size guidelines. You'll have to consider how



much sunlight is available, how much room you have for containers, and what effect your garden will have on your neighbors on either side, above, and especially, below (tip: Water very carefully!).

If you don't have a balcony or patio space, you can still grow many things by a window—as long as they receive a few hours of sunlight a day. Some urban neighborhoods offer community gardens in which you can claim your plot on a common piece of land, then plant and tend it yourself. (Check with your local recreation department; some community gardens charge a fee.)



DEALING WITH PESTS

Bugs and worms are inevitable. But before you hook up the spray gun and blast them with malathion, there is a kinder, gentler way to keep the pest population under control while maintaining most the crop for yourself. Try the handpicking method as much as you can. As gross as it may sound, a few random insects will not cause any real damage to the plants. Hosing off the leaves and fruit will get rid of a lot of them, too.

There are some environmentally safe insecticides on the market, and I would recommend one of these if you're losing the bug battle. Always follow the directions on the label.

DOING YOUR PREP WORK

Your planning should take into consideration these important variables: If you live in frost-free areas like Southern California's coastal regions or in Florida along the gulf or ocean, your choice of vegetables is wide and varied and you can plant early in the year. In cold climates, wait until the chance of frost has passed.

GARDEN SIZE: We've already addressed small-space gardening. If you have a yard, you simply need to decide how much space you are going to devote to your vegetable garden. Realize that the bigger the garden, the greater the

effort involved. My advice: Err on the conservative side, especially if this is your first vegetable garden. Going overboard now will be a waste of materials, labor, water, and crops. A convenient size is 2 feet deep by 10 feet long. It's easy to reach from front to back, yet deep enough to plant two or three rows.

SOIL: The soil should contain lots of humus—that organic material that comes from compost piles, bagged planting mix, rotted leaves, or other decomposed plant matter. Not only does the humus help hold in moisture, it contains many nutrients vegetables need. It also keeps the soil from packing and allows air to penetrate down to the roots.

PLANTING AND TENDING

VEGETABLES AND HERBS: Pick sure-fire vegetables such as radishes, lettuces, green beans, turnips, squash, peppers, beets, onions, tomatoes, and swiss chard. For herb gardens, include oregano, basil, sage, mint, and chives. All of these vegetables and herbs are planted from seed, and the secret to success is simple: Follow the directions on the seed packages exactly.

FERTILIZING: After the first true leaves appear on the vegetables and herbs it is time to fertilize. For leafy crops use a high-nitrogen fertilizer. For root crops and those that have fruit, use a well-balanced chemical fertilizer (ask for recommendations at your local garden supply store). Apply the fertilizer

according to the directions on the package, but if you have any doubts, sow on the scant side. Be sure to water well after you fertilize. Vegetables are voracious eaters, so you may need to reapply several times during the growing season. If you notice the growth rate slows even though the weather is warm and the plants are receiving adequate water, it's time to fertilize.

WATERING: Keep the soil well-crumbed without disturbing the roots. This will allow the water to penetrate deeply without runoff. Water either early or late in the day; water will simply evaporate midday, wasting water and leaving you with thirsty plants. On the other hand, if the water stands on top, you're overwatering, which can cause root rot. Water as seldom and as deeply as possible to get the water down to the roots is a rule of green thumbs.

REAPING THE BENEFITS

After you've sown the seeds, be patient. The radishes will be the first to come up—you will be eating them a month after planting. As the vegetables mature you can harvest them when they get to be edible sizes. At last! You have the fruits of your labor in your hands—and in your kitchen.

Many of your vegetables can be eaten raw. If you

cook them, prepare them to enhance their natural flavors, with minimal fat and salt; and you'll be reaping the benefits of healthful eating, as well.

BOB'S BEST RATATOUILLE

Serves 4 as a side dish

(Try serving leftover ratatouille on toast for breakfast.)

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups sliced zucchini
- 1 cup sliced brown onion
- 1 cup diced eggplant
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup peeled, chopped tomatoes
- 1 cup diced green sweet peppers
- 1 Tbsp dried oregano
- 1 Tbsp dried basil
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- Garnish: 1 Tbsp grated Romano cheese

Heat olive oil in a skillet large enough to hold all ingredients. Add everything except the tomatoes and the cheese. Sauté until the vegetables start to get tender, about 10 minutes.

Add tomatoes and cover. Simmer for 20 minutes. Remove cover and simmer until the mixture becomes fairly thick.

Sprinkle with cheese and serve hot.

BOB'S FAVORITE SWISS CHARD SERVES 2

- 3 cups of Swiss chard leaves, julienned
- 1 onion, cut into large dice
- 1 tsp fresh oregano, minced
- 1 Tbsp vinegar
- 1 tsp olive oil
- Pinch ground pepper

Remove the large stems from chard leaves.

Put all ingredients into a large, nonstick sauté pan and cook over medium heat until the chard is wilted.

Serve hot or cold. □

This is a revision of an article printed in *Horizons* magazine, May-June 1995 issue. Permission given by PacifiCare Health Systems.

Robert D. Horwitz is a retired aerospace engineer. He is a regular contributor to local publications, describing the plants that he grows in Point Loma.

Photographs courtesy of Calif. Assoc. of Nurserymen.

CLEANUP TIME

by MORT BRIGADIER



NOW IS THE TIME to Spring Clean the garden, to wash behind its proverbial ears, to prevent the bad things that happened last summer from happening again.

WASH YOUR TROUBLES AWAY!

Deciduous or dormant, hose it down before dormant spraying. Blast away with a high pressure

stream of water. Pick a sunny day to don a bathing suit and clean every tree, plant or bush in the garden with water. Concentrate on the underside of the leaves where the insects lay their eggs. Try to knock down as many leaves as you can to guarantee good coverage.

Garden pests nest and hide under a protective covering of webbing, dust, dirt, and debris that settles and accumulates over time. This prevents the beneficial insects from getting to them. When the beneficials can't get to them, or when the beneficials are killed off by insecticides, it makes the use of insecticides stupid, wasteful, and ineffective, but highly detrimental to the health of the unprotected beneficial insect, as well as to the unprotected gardener.

This may be the last irrigation the plant gets before the winter rains. A subsequent spray of Safer soap or Volk oil will suffocate any insects, larvae, or eggs that survive the water bath. Rake under fruit trees and apply a thin sprinkling of diazinon granules to greet the ants when they return to the trees next spring. Mulch over the granules to a depth of six inches.

PLANT NOW FOR SUMMER BLOOM

Take advantage of the cool weather to do the heavy work that needs to be done. This is the time to cut back,



Create more garden space by building a raised soil bed on a patio or bank. Improve upon existing garden space by adding a bed above the poor soil.

California Association of Nurserymen

divide, spray, prune, and plant. Except for tropicals, plant all trees, shrubs, vines, and bushes now (especially native plants) while the ground is still warm enough to encourage some root growth and is porous enough to work with relative ease. Many native plants are water hogs. Do not confuse native plants with xeriscape.

Fall planting will not result in much winter growth in San Diego, but the plants will surprise you with a burst of color and foliage come spring.

Now is also the time to remove old piles of gardening things that were saved over the years and never used. They might become nesting places for Africanized honey bees.

PRUNING

Prune to encourage growth and fruiting. It is essential to remove all dead wood and mummies.

Prune stone fruit before all the leaves fall. This makes it much easier to clean up, but may result in a smaller yield, reflecting a more rational use of water and fertilizer.

Before making the first pruning cut, learn to recognize the branch bark ridge that joins limb to trunk. Make all cuts forward of this ridge and leave a stub to doughnut and heal over naturally. Dip and sterilize pruning tools after each cut in a ten percent solution of Chlorox as a preventive measure. Bag and properly dispose of any infected material. Wash pruning tools thoroughly for storage.

READY FOR DORMANT SPRAY?

Dormant spray must be done every three weeks, starting now, for at least three applications. Do not dormant spray after buds begin to show color. To be effective, the tree must be relatively clean of dust and debris so the material can make contact with the tree.

To be effective, the spray must reach into every nook and cranny of the bark, branches, stems, etc. It would be wise to spray the ground under the canopy to cover any leaves or twigs that were not raked away. If it rains soon after an application, spray again.

Remember not to use a sulfur-based spray on apricots and that you may need to add soluble copper to a copper oil spray. We need to use at

least 15% copper to be thoroughly effective. Avoid overspray onto evergreens. □

COL Mort Brigadier is a retired army paratrooper. He has an MBA in management and is a UCCE Master Gardener. He says that the comments in this article do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Cooperative Extension Service, but are based on his own terrible experiences.

Gleanings . . .

AUSTRALIAN WASP . . .

You probably have noticed that local eugenia plants have been looking healthy again. This is due to a tiny parasitic wasp that preys on the pest that attacks the eugenia. The pest is the eugenia psyllid, *Trioza eugeniae*. This pest resembles an aphid and it lays its eggs on the eugenia's new leaves that it eats. It also excretes a sugar-laden waste called honeydew that nourishes a sooty mold that cakes the leaves with a black dust.

This wasp was found by Donald Dahlsten near Sydney Australia, the native home of eugenia, *Syzygium paniculatum*. The first wasps were released in 1992 at the San Diego Zoo and in other areas where the eugenia is a popular plant. The wasps have multiplied and are now keeping the psyllid population down to a manageable level. You probably haven't been aware of this "war" because the size of the 1.5 mm predator and the size of

the 3 mm prey. This popular hedge plant is once again handsome and healthy in San Diego.

FIRE ANTS . . .

We have been lucky in our area, we have ants but not fire ants. Their bites "burns like fire." These nasty bugs were accidentally imported to the United States from South America in the early 1900s. They are usually found in the Southeastern United States and Texas. They do not like temperatures below 10°F so that has controlled the spreading. Recently it has been noted that the ants are beginning to interbreed with species that have better cold tolerance. Researchers are searching the wilds of South America for natural predators and methods to control the ants as they are becoming a more widespread problem every year.

If we get them, perhaps the old tried-and-true methods of getting rid of ants will work. Many of us find that pouring boiling water down the holes in the ant nests helps to keep the population down. Others use boric acid powder. If it is sprinkled on paths and nests the ants will ingest it while attempting to clean off the powder. Both methods are inexpensive and nontoxic to humans and pets.

FALL FLOWER POSTAGE STAMPS . . .

The new series of garden flowers is out. The spring and summer issues were beautiful and this fall season series is lovely, too. The five flowers are asters, dahlias, chrysanthemums, hydrangeas and rudbeckias. In case you don't recognize rudbeckia—it's sometimes called gloriosa daisy or black-eyed Susan.

Books of twenty stamps make nice gifts.

TOMATO CONVERSATION . . .

Chinese archaeologists have grown tomato-like plants from 2,000 year old seeds they found in a bamboo tube buried in an ancient Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D.220) tomb in southwestern China. The fruit is a different shape from the modern tomato, but the taste is the same. The tube was wrapped in a damp cloth to keep it from cracking. A month later during a routine check of the tube, it was found that a number of the seeds had sprouted. These seedlings were given to the agricultural research institute to raise. Wonder when we'll get a chance to try them?

LATE DATES . . .

Since 1902 the arrival of fresh dates at the market has been a sure sign of autumn. They are late this year because of the long cool spring. The harvest is starting. Over 41 million pounds are harvest annually. Most of them are produced in the Coachella Valley. Over twenty varieties are grown, but 90-95% are Deglet Noor. The Medjool, a sweeter and larger date, comprises about 5% of the crop. Fresh dates are delicious and make a



Eugenia psyllid (*Trioza eugeniae*)


wonderful gift. (Most out-of-staters have never seen a date except in a cake.)

GIANT WHITEFLY . . .

Giant whitefly is an agricultural and horticultural pest that invaded California three years ago. It seems to prefer coastal climates and urban areas. It is prevalent on avocados and citrus and it likes hibiscus, too. (It is about three times as big as the old pesty whitefly.) When immature giant whiteflies gather on the bottom of a leaf, it looks like the leaf has a beard. These beards will break loose during windy periods and can be found floating on pools and laying on the ground. In September the California Department of Food and Agriculture, in cooperation with the San Diego County Department of Agriculture, released 3000 predaceous ladybird beetles into urban areas of San Diego. It is hoped that this biological control mechanism for this pest can control the giant whitefly infestation before it becomes a more widespread problem. Residents of the Point Loma area are finding that the old whitefly treatment of early morning washing of the plants with cold or cold soapy water helps to reduce the size of the infestation.

The beards are formed by waxy rods (protuberances) produced by immature giant whiteflies. The rods can reach up to six inches in length. They break off easily, and are possibly formed to keep the leaf surface moist or to deter predators. □

Photograph of eugenia psyllid courtesy of UC, Berkeley, College of Natural Resources.



- GREENHOUSES
- SUNROOMS
- POOL ENCLOSURES
- CONSERVATORIES



Now is the Time . . .

*A CULTURAL CALENDAR OF CARE FROM OUR
AFFILIATES, UC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION,
AND CALIFORNIA GARDEN STAFF*

AFRICAN VIOLETS

Helen La Gamma

NOW IS THE TIME

TO PREVENT extreme differences between night and day temperatures.

TO KEEP the plants well groomed and repot those that have outgrown their pots. A good rule—the pot should be $1\frac{1}{2}$ times the diameter of the leaf span.

TO CONTINUE to have good circulation of air around the plants.

TO PROVIDE adequate humidity; monitor the temperature carefully.

TO PLAN on using your plants with holiday decorations; plant in containers to match color scheme.

BEGONIAS

Margaret Lee

NOW IS THE TIME

TO CLEAN up all debris—remove dead leaves and spent blooms.

TO WATER as needed.

TO PUT a top dressing of your favorite mulch around plants to replace any soil or mulch washed away by fall rains.

TO GIVE a light feeding several times a month to help the plants withstand any adverse conditions a little better.

TO SPRAY for mildew control.

TO ALLOW tuberous begonias to die back on their own; put aside and let rest, but sprinkle occasionally.

TO BE VIGILANT for insects; spray for mealybugs and other pests.

BONSAI

Dr. Herbert Markowitz

NOW IS THE TIME

TO REDUCE watering, deciduous trees require just

enough to keep them from drying out.

TO MOVE plants into shade if a hot spell occurs. Avoid a second growth period during this time—it will weaken the trees.

TO REFRAIN from fertilizing or transplanting at this time.

TO KEEP deciduous trees protected from sudden changes of temperature.

TO REMOVE any old leaves, fruit or seeds from deciduous trees.

TO PRUNE black pines by cutting the candles about half length.

TO GRAFT conifers in December.

BROMELIADS

Mary Siemers

NOW IS THE TIME

TO STOP fertilizing during fall and winter months, except those that are kept in a greenhouse.

TO REDUCE the frequency of watering when weather turns cooler.

TO PROTECT your plants from hail damage during the rainy season by providing overhead protection such as shade cloth that will allow plenty of light.

TO PROTECT plants from freezing temperatures by covering with sheets or newspaper.

TO KEEP plants clean by cutting spent blooms and dead leaves with scissors.

TO SPACE plants apart to allow air circulation. This helps to prevent scale.

CACTI & SUCCULENTS

Joseph A. Betzler

NOW IS THE TIME

TO WATCH your plants. Most cacti and succulents have a dormancy period. Depending on the weather, many winter growers may start early growing.

TO FERTILIZE the plants that are actively growing.

TO WATER only in the morning on a day that is going to be warm. By doing this, no standing water will be on plants in the evening.

TO PROTECT tender plants from excessive cold and winter rains. Repair cracks and leaks in shelters before the rains arrive.

TO KEEP ants under control; they transport aphids and mealybugs.

TO REMEMBER that when plants become too cold during the cold evenings the growth of fungi and bacteria can be fostered.

TO START looking for winter growing succulents to add as an extra dimension to your collection.

TO CLEAN up your plants' growing area.

CAMELLIAS

E. C. (Gene) Snooks

NOW IS THE TIME

TO FEED with a 2-10-10 fertilizer to promote larger and better blooms.

TO CONTINUE disbudding.

TO PICK up all old blooms to prevent petal blight.

TO SELECT new plants while in bloom.

TO TREAT some blooms with gibberellic acid for larger and earlier blooms.

TO MAINTAIN a regular spray program as needed. Watch for mites and looper worms.

TO KEEP a regular watering schedule, never let a plant dry out—maintain an even, moist condition.

TO MAINTAIN humidity—on any dry, hot days mist in later afternoon to keep from burning leaves.

DAHLIAS

Abe Janzen

NOW IS THE TIME

TO WITHHOLD water and fertilizer to let the plants go dormant.

TO ALLOW plants to dry—when brown about 12 inches from ground, cut off the stalk.

TO LEAVE tubers in the ground to harden off if there is good drainage. Otherwise lift roots before the heavy rains.

TO WASH clumps after digging, let dry a few hours before storing. If dividing tubers, treat cut area with soil sulfur, store in vermiculite, sand, or other medium. Store out of the weather. Be sure tubers are tagged before storing.

EPIPHYLLUMS

San Diego Epiphyllum Society

NOW IS THE TIME

TO WITHHOLD fertilizer, especially one with nitrogen. Allow the plants to become semi-dormant.

TO WATER sparingly, but do not allow plants to dry out completely.

TO PROTECT plants from exposure to the elements. Frost, hail, and strong winds can cause irreversible damage. Overexposure to harsh winter sunlight can be as detrimental as hot summer sun.

TO TIE or stake long branches so they will not break when winds and rain arrive.

Antonelli Brothers

TUBEROUS BEGONIAS

2545 Capitola Road
Santa Cruz, California 95062

18-page Catalog \$1.00

TO CHECK for snails and slugs; a few granules of Sluggeta at the base of the plant are often effective and leave little to no residue.

TO MAINTAIN good grooming and prune out nonproductive branches to conserve the plant energy.

FERNS

Ray Sodomka

NOW IS THE TIME

TO CHECK containers to ensure planting mix has not completely broken down; add more mix to containers that need it.

TO BE ALERT for insects. Slugs and snails are very active.

TO WATER if it does not rain. Check plants not reached by rain.

TO APPLY a weak fertilizer solution once more before the December rest period.

TO PLANT spores and keep in a warm area.

TO CLEAN out weeds, oxalis, and debris from pots.

TO PROTECT plants at night in frost areas. Cover with newspaper or old sheets or place in garage.

FRUIT TREES AND VINES

Vincent Lazaneo, Hort. Advisor, UC Coop Extension

NOW IS THE TIME

TO PRUNE deciduous trees and vines after their foliage has dropped. Wait until early spring to prune evergreens.

TO SPRAY dormant deciduous trees and vines with horticultural oil to kill scale, insects, spider mites, and other overwintering pests.

TO SPRAY peach and nectarine trees with a fungicide such as lime sulfur (calcium polysulfide) to control leaf curl.

TO ORDER bare-root trees and vines to plant in December or January.

TO PROVIDE frost protection for young citrus and other subtropical fruit trees.

FUCHSIAS

William Selby

NOW IS THE TIME

TO ALLOW plants to rest; reduce or stop fertilizing.

TO DO heavy pruning in mild areas or in a greenhouse. Can make cuttings if a good tip available.

TO CLEAN up. Remove all dead leaves, blossoms, and debris from pots and baskets and around plants in the ground.

TO WATCH for insects, molds and fungi in warmer areas.

TO MULCH plants left outside in areas where there is danger of frost; move baskets under cover for protection.

GERANIUMS (Pelargoniums)

Carol Roller

NOW IS THE TIME

TO WATER thoroughly when plants become somewhat dry. Watering will not need to be done as often as in the warmer seasons. Allow the excess water to drain away. Keep the foliage as dry as possible.

TO CONTINUE feeding as needed. Do not allow plants to show prolonged signs of nutritional deficiencies. Use a balanced fertilizer that can be dissolved in water.

TO CONTINUE a pest control and disease prevention program, using all products according to the manufacturer's direction.

TO PRUNE any plants which have not been cut back. At least one green leaf should remain on every stem of regals, scented, and similar types. Lanky plants which were pruned in the fall can be cut again to produce compact plants.

TO MAKE cuttings from the prunings. Shelter cuttings from extreme weather. They will root faster in a warm location.

TO PINCH the rest of the plants which were pruned in the fall.

TO GIVE plants temporary shelter if the temperature approaches freezing.

TO ROTATE plants on a regular basis in order to keep well shaped.

GREEN THUMB

Penny Bunker

NOW IS THE TIME

TO FEED bird-of-paradise. Cut out dead growth from clumps to improve appearance.

TO CUT mums to within a few inches of the ground after blooming.

TO PLANT bulbs for spring blooms—daffodils, narcissus, ranunculus, anemones, scillas, callas, tulips, and hyacinths.

TO PRUNE and shape holly and pyracantha when cutting berries for holiday decorations.

TO APPLY dormant spray in December to control pests and disease next year; to use snail and slug bait regularly.

TO PREPARE and enrich your soil, preparing now for the bare-root planting of roses, trees, etc. in late December and January.

IRIS

San Diego/Imperial Counties Iris Society

NOW IS THE TIME

TO CLEAN beds of dead leaves and weeds; aphids winter-over in debris-filled areas.

TO SPRAY for aphids or give a light feeding of a systemic to control all sucking plant pests.

TO MAKE a final planting of bearded types, spurias, Louisianas, and Siberians.

TO PLANT bulbous type iris—Dutch, English, and Spanish for spring bloom.

TO MOVE and replant Pacific Coast natives in late December when the little white roots are showing. Water well until they are established.

NATIVES

Jeanine De Hart

NOW IS THE TIME

TO GET those natives planted that you purchased in October if you haven't already planted them.

TO FEED those natives that you purchased last year. A light feeding of a slow-release fertilizer is best.

TO TAKE advantage of any early rains to check for low or poorly drained areas. Use these areas to plant native wetland material such as *Anemopsis californica*, yerba manza.

TO TAKE root cuttings of Matilija poppy, (*Romneya coulteri*). A piece of root as thick as a pencil, quite orange in color and about 4" long works best.

ORCHIDS

Charles Fouquette

NOW IS THE TIME

TO FEED a dilute solution of 30-10-10 fertilizer to intergeneric *Oncidium* hybrids, *Brassidium*, *Miltonia* if they are planted in bark. If they are grown in any other medium, feed a solution of 18-18-18. (The numbers reflect a guideline, not hard and fast numbers.)

TO FEED *Cymbidium* a 30-20-20 fertilizer. Stake new spikes—do not rotate plants. Protect buds and flowers from hail, rain, or sun damage.

TO REPOT *Cattleya* if new growth is outside of the pot and the plant is in active growth. (Otherwise, wait until spring.) Feed an 18-18-18 fertilizer, or similar, during the winter and only every third watering.

TO CLEAN up old leaves, flowers, and other "trash" in growing areas. Remove shade cloth to give as much light as possible to the common growing areas. Clean the swamp cooler; drain the water out of the bottom; protect the motor by wrapping it with a plastic trash bag after you have oiled it and checked the belts and cords.

TO CLEAN humidity spray nozzles. Remove nozzles from feed line, loosen the brass parts and take apart. Soak these parts in a glass container with a solution of ten parts water to one part swimming pool acid (e.g., phosphoric, muriatic), using protective gloves and

goggles. Or use pure vinegar, which works well but is slower. Through the glass container you will see when the parts are clean; rinse them with clear water and reinstall, after flushing the feed lines well.

TO CHECK the heater fittings, pilot light, flues, and vents. Check that the temperature sensors and activators are set at their HI-LO settings. You must have a fresh inlet somewhere in the hothouse, for AIR. You need clean air for combustion in the heating chamber and to replace the air burned in combustion going up the flue to the outside of the hothouse. If you don't provide a clean air intake, you will have poor and unclean combustion and ethylene gas in the hothouse killing flowers.

TO LET deciduous *Dendrobium* go dormant. Stop feeding when leaves start to drop. Water just enough to maintain root moisture. (Start to fertilize and water normally next spring when buds have swollen and are starting to develop and plant is starting active growth.)

TO HAVE *Phalaenopsis* be well on their way in the flower initiation mode at this time. Increase light to about 1500 footcandles by any means—shade cloth removal, etc. Try to duplicate the weather in the areas where phals are native (at this time of year the temperatures drop and it is very clear, cloudless, and relatively dry). You lowered the night temperature through October to 52-55 degrees while fertilizing with dilute solutions of 30-20-20 every other watering. In November, maintain the high light and increase the night temperature to 62-65 degrees (your target minimum temperature). The first week, water with clear water to flush all salts that may remain. The next three weeks, water with a solution of epsom salts, mixed 4 lbs. in 5 gals. water, applied through a Hozon proportioner. This should give the plants the magnesium sulfate they need for colorful flowers. The first week of December, flush again with clear water. The next three weeks, use a high phosphorus fertilizer to help flower production and plant turgidity. By January, you should be back to average care and fertilization. Try to maintain the high light until the temperatures get warmer, then drop the light to 1000± footcandles until next year. Maintain air movement at all times.

ROSES

Marianne Truby

NOW IS THE TIME

TO ENCOURAGE rose bushes to go dormant. Do not remove rose hips but be aware roses never do go dormant here. Do not let bushes become too dry if rains are late.

TO FERTILIZE with only low nitrogen fertilizers.

TO SELECT replacement and new varieties from

bareroot supplies as they arrive at your local nursery. **TO PREPARE** planting holes by adding bone meal and/or superphosphate. Add suitable amendments to existing soil to give bareroots a good medium.

TO PRUNE floribundas in late December.

TO DORMANT SPRAY in December and early January. Spray before pruning and cleaning up old foliage and again after pruning to control mildew and fungus spores.

VEGETABLES

Vincent Lazaneo, Hort. Advisor, UC Coop Extension
NOW IS THE TIME

TO REMOVE and compost warm-season vegetables to prevent pests and diseases from overwintering on them.

TO CONTINUE planting cool-season vegetables which will not be subject to frost injury.

TO PLANT seeds of short-day onions, such as 'Grano', 'Granex', or 'Crystal Wax', and garlic cloves in November for bulbs next summer.

TO PLANT dormant crowns of artichoke, asparagus, and rhubarb. To avoid crown rot of rhubarb, plant crowns in containers filled with porous potting soil and transplant into garden where drainage is good after several leaves have developed.

VEGETABLES, ANNUALS

from UC Cooperative Extension Publications

NOW IS ONE OF THE BETTER TIMES IN FROST-FREE AREAS

TO PUT IN TRANSPLANTS OF: broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower — California natives, cineraria, columbine, fairy primrose (*Primula malacoides*), garden stock (*Matthiola incana*), hollyhock, Iceland poppy, ornamental kale, pansy, pink sand verbenia, pot marigold (*Calendula*), snapdragon, and viola.

TO PUT IN SEEDS OF: beets, carrots, chard, kale, kholrabi, lettuce, onion (green and dry), parsnips, spinach, and turnips — baby blue eyes, California natives, candytuft, Chinese forget-me-not (*Cynoglossum amabile*), forget-me-not (*Myosotis sylvatica*), lupine, sweet allysum (*Lobularia maritima*), spring flowering sweet pea, and Virginia stock (*Malcolmia maritima*).

R. Barry Lewis

Computer Systems Analyst

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with an infecting spore. Little, brown spots will appear on the underside of a leaf. These multiply into a starburst pattern or a random scattering of pustules. An experienced eye can discern the infection without turning the leaf over because the parasitic invasion creates pale circles that are visible on the top side of the leaf. The spots eventually become dry and brown. The infected leaves turn yellow and die. The spores continue to infect the newer leaves and, in its severe stage, rust also will appear on stems and stipules. Eventually the plant is killed.

The spores do not overwinter in cold climates, but the disease can be renewed each year by spores in the air or from infected zonals that have been overwintered in a protected location. Rust is a very serious problem in Southern California. Spores live throughout the year on zonal leaves. When a suitable germination temperature is reached (optimum: 61-70°F) and moisture is present, the parasite proliferates.

Rust is highly contagious, so the procedure to avoid further spread is extensive. Besides distribution by air currents, it is spread by water and personal contact. All zonals should be closely examined for signs of rust. If there is a full-scale infection on numerous plants, the options are:

- 1.) Discard the entire lot by cutting the plants to the ground, placing all plant parts, including dropped leaves, into a bag that can be closed. The roots can be dug out of the ground and discarded. Entire containerized plants can be put into bags for disposal. Plant something else in that space; ivy leaved pelargoniums are a good substitute.

- 2.) Plants may be salvaged by pruning, discarding all plant material in a closed bag, and treating the plants with a fungicide for zonal rust. The fungicide will need to be repeated from time to time, depending on the manufacturer's recommendations.

If a single plant is found with rust, it should immediately be isolated from other zonals. Cover with a bag to confine the spores while it is being moved. The plant must be treated with an appropriate fungicide. If discarding the plant and keeping cuttings is preferred,

fungicide the cuttings and keep them away from other cuttings. It would be wise to treat the rest of the zonals with fungicide at the dilution rate recommended as a preventive measure.

After handling a zonal with rust, a person should wash and change clothing before going near uninfected plants. Some writers recommend burning the contaminated plant material. This is not very practical for most people. Putting it inside a bag is easier. I would use a plastic bag because it can be closed tightly. I would put it into the regular collection as opposed to the yard recycling because plastic is unacceptable there, and open cans allow the spores to escape.

Many people advocate picking off leaves that have rust lesions. This is not a satisfactory method of eliminating rust. Leaves are a vital part of a plant's manufacturing system. Spores are present on the newer leaves. They are invisible to the naked eye, but when conditions are favorable for them, they will germinate and reestablish the disease. In the meantime, the plant has been weakened by the excess loss of foliage.

Fungicides for use against zonal rust can be obtained from agricultural supply houses if the local nurseries do not stock them. The label must be read very carefully. The fungicide will not be effective unless the label says it is for use on zonals; unfortunately, the manufacturer probably

will list them as geraniums instead of pelargoniums.

Some products are systemic. The chemical is absorbed and works from inside the plant. Others are contact chemicals. Their spray must touch the lower surfaces of the leaves. This is very difficult if plants are in the ground. Different dilution rates will be recommended for curative applications and preventive programs. Different spray schedules also may be recommended for the two uses. Generally the curative procedure is a stronger application. It should go without saying, but the prescribed safety procedures should always be followed.

I will not name a fungicide to be used for zonal rust because I do not endorse commercial products. The chemicals available for use in California change from time to time, so it is best to seek the advice of a professional



Typical leaves of *Pelargonium xhortorum*
and assortment of floral types

who has the latest information.

For several years I have been watching some untended zonals along county roads in the Vista area. When I first noticed them, they were already full of rust. Except one cluster, they are gone now, they have died of their affliction. In the meantime, they spewed spores into the air and infected countless other zonals.

There has been some research directed at producing rust-resistant zonals. Zonals which are hybridized from *P. acetosum* have a high level of rust resistance, but the plants have small, thickened leaves and shaggy blooms in shades of pink and salmon. These hybrids do not have great public acceptance. If rust-immune zonals are genetically engineered, they will be patented plants in common colors and plain forms. The collectors' zonals such as 'Appleblossom Rosebud' and 'Henry Cox' will not be replicated. In order to retain these, clean nursery stock must be maintained. As this becomes more difficult, fewer nurseries will produce the unusual zonals. The limited selection of culture-virus-indexed zonals and seedline zonals will predominate in the marketplace, but these, too, are subject to rust.

People who have zonals, and wish to keep them healthy, must be vigilant. Growing them behind a barrier to avoid the prevailing wind may be helpful in some cases. Water should not be splashed on the foliage. Any newly-acquired zonal should be isolated from the main collection for an indefinite period of time. If rust is found, it must be eradicated and not allowed to infect other zonals. □

Carol S. Roller is a commercial grower of plants of the Geranium Family. She is a past president of the International Geranium Society and writes for international Geranium journals. Photo by author.

COMMUNICATIONS . . .

WE WELCOME LETTERS PERTAINING TO GARDENS!

CAMELIAS AGAIN

Editor's note: In the September-October issue, there was a discussion about when to transplant camellias. This discussion arose because in the May-June issue in "Now Is the Time" instead of saying it was time to transplant those plants that had not started their new growth, we left out the "not" so that the instruction was the reverse of the intended. A David O. Lofgren brought this error to our attention.

In looking back at the last twenty years of this magazine, I found that in eleven (non-sequential) May-June issues, this same erroneous statement, or a very similar one, was made. Congratulations to Mr. Lofgren for reading carefully and for taking the trouble to bring this to our attention.

I thank our readers who bring these things to our notice. If this was done previously, regarding the camellia item, I apologize that the correction didn't stick.

ADDRESSES

(covers)

We would appreciate hearing from anyone having current information on Ilse Scheer.

(page 170)

Golden Gardens, 16185 Monache Road, Apple Valley CA 92307-1438

(subscription for one year, \$3.50, foreign \$4.75)

(page 171)

("Gardening for Good Health . . .") *Horizons*, P. O. Box 489, Cypress CA 90630-0489

(pages 171, 172, 173, 174, 182)

California Association of Nurserymen, "Garden News Release," 4620 Northgate Blvd., Suite 155, Sacramento CA 95834

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PLANT RANUNCULUS NOW

by BARBARA S. JONES

FROM SEPTEMBER THROUGH JANUARY is the best time to plant ranunculus bulbs. The bulbs, botanical tubers, should be planted in well-drained soil. They should be planted about 7" apart with the "toes" down and covered with about an inch of soil. After planting, the soil must be kept moist but not wet until the bulbs have sprouted. After that, watering two to three times per week will be satisfactory. Use a good balanced fertilizer, 10-10-10, once a month. If you want to save the bulbs, dig them up when the plants die back after the blooming season. Store them in a cool, dry place (40-80°F).

Ranunculus do well in pots and can be grown outdoors in a climate ranging from 40-85°F with moderate humidity. They can tolerate partial shade. If grown inside, the plant must be exposed to high light (not in a windowsill) in an even temperature of 50-70°F.

The plants will bloom for about two months in our spring, February through May. They are a popular cut flower and will last longer if a teaspoon of sugar or half a can of a sugar-sweetened lemon-lime soda is added to the vase.

The Ranunculus, *Ranunculus asiaticus*, is a native of

Asia Minor. It is popular and widely-grown throughout the world. Ranunculus have been grown in this area since 1923. Luther Gage, an early settler and botanist, purchased his first seeds in England. In 1933, his next door neighbor Edwin Frazee obtained some locally-grown seeds from Mr. Gage and planted his first commercial crop. The San Diego area is famous for the magnificent display of thousands of blooming Tecolote Giant Ranunculus on hillsides off Interstate 5 in Carlsbad. Every March and April crowds of visitors flock to view, photograph, and purchase flowers and bulbs at this seventy acre ranch. The field crop is planted from seeds every fall. Thanks to the cooperative efforts between the land owner (the Paul Ecke family), the grower (Mellano & Company), the Carlsbad Agricultural Improvement Fund, and the California Coastal Conservancy, these flower fields will continue to bloom.

Hint: If you plan to visit the fields in the blooming period, go during the week. Last year cars were backed-up in both directions for miles on the freeway on the week-ends. □

Photograph courtesy of Calif. Association of Nurserymen.





Book Reviews

USING FOLIAGE PLANTS IN THE GARDEN

Jill Billington

New York, Dist. by Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., 1994, 129 pages, 40 color photos, 60 b&w illustrations, 7 1/4" x 9 3/4", softcover \$14.95
Previously published as *Architectural Foliage*.

I found this book a breath of fresh air from the numerous publications that today are prominent with "English Gardens" featuring riots of color. The author points the way to using foliage plants to illustrate a restful, interesting, beautiful and serene setting. Many of these foliage plants referred to and shown in the illustrations are readily available here in Southern California. Easy maintenance and a beautiful garden of different textures, greens and greys, even on a year-round basis can be attractive and especially restful on a warm day. The small areas prevalent in today's homescape are ideally suited to creating an interesting garden with foliage plants. Best of all it can be a restful garden, one in which you may relax!

Reviewed by Marianne Truby

SHAKESPEARE'S FLOWERS, 5" x 7 1/4"

A MEDIEVAL FLOWER GARDEN 5 1/4" x 6 1/2"

A MEDIEVAL HERBAL 5 1/4" x 6 1/2"

San Francisco, Chronicle Books, 1994, 72 pages, 30 color illustrations, hardcover, \$8.95

These pretty little books may not be essential purchases for a horticultural library for a reference collection, but they are attractive and inexpensive and would be good choices for gifts. These three titles are the result of some solid research, and though no editors and/or compilers are named there are lists of acknowledgements which indicate the scope of this work. Collections of medieval manuscripts and rare early printed books in various libraries in Europe have been consulted. The material gathered has been used to create mini-anthologies in which illustrations and texts have been elegantly matched.

Shakespeare's Flowers uses selections from his works. All of these feature flowers and plants and each is accompanied by a floral illustration taken from a Tudor manuscript. The introduction describes gardening as a part of Elizabethan life and demonstrates the Bard's habitual interest in plants and botany. This is a successful marriage of words and pictures.

A Medieval Flower Garden contains selections from twenty-six writers ranging from the first to the sixteenth centuries. Among them is John Gerard, whose book *The Herbal* is included in the San Diego Floral Association Library. The introduction to this title discusses landscaping styles in early

gardens and has something to say about the symbolism of flowers. The illustrations show scenes and panoramas rather than individual plants, and this book is also an elegant blend of materials.

A Medieval Herbal focuses on herbs and their uses, and the introduction gives an excellent overview of this ancient and ever-fascinating art. Here also the illustrations do not concentrate on plants only, so these glowing pages offer a glimpse of life in medieval times; most of them show gardening activities, but on page 67 there is a view of a uni-sex outdoor Jacuzzi in full operation. It evokes an interesting comparison with a twentieth century health clinic.

These books merit real attention. They are well-designed and likely to be welcomed by gardeners, herbalists, flower lovers, bookworms, and donees.

Reviewed by Elsie M. Topham

FLOWERS REDISCOVERED

Mädlerlake; Tom Pritchard and Billy Jarecki

New York, Artisan, 1994, 232 pages, 191 color photographs, 9" x 12", softcover, \$24.95

This is the revision of a book which became popular in the 80s. The two authors are principals of the recently adjudged "best flower shop in New York (Pure Mädlerlake)." This book is their gift to all of us who love to bring flowers into our lives. Reading and absorbing the Mädlerlake spirit, you will find yourself liberated from the kind of stiff, formal arrangements that are anchored in oasis. Instead, you will be itching to create the luxurious and sensual arrangements this book inspires. If you merely flip through this book you will see it as a book of unusual flower photos. If you read the text and captions and study the photos, you will find yourself exhilarated and inspired.

Reviewed by Connie Beck

A BOOK OF GARDENING: Ideas, Methods, Designs

Penelope Hobhouse

New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1995, 318 pages, 61 color photos, 5" by 7 1/2", paperback, \$19.95

Pamela Hobhouse, with her second husband, was once chief gardener for a National Trust property until the increasing numbers of visitors made the job too exhausting. But her interest remained, and *A Book of Gardening* is full of information garnered from what goes on at the 160 gardens and 60 landscape parks maintained by Britain's National Trust.

The properties range in size from small town gardens like Carlyle's home in Chelsea to the 180 acres of grand Cliveden, the estate of the late fabled Lord and Lady Astor. In sum, the Trust encircles the greatest collection of cultivated plants in the world—wonderful for the avid garden-visiting Brits.

This fat paperback is crammed with botanical wisdom. Sections deal with garden frameworks, borders, rose gardens, herb gardens, ferneries, walls and the planting they sustain, meadows, woodlands, and, more prosaically, composting, winter protection, and maintenance machinery. The pleasant, muted photos are from twenty-seven sources.

The principal aims of the Trust are 1) to save cultivated plants, many of which disappear each year, and 2) to build up various collections in different gardens. Some Trust gardens are over 350 years in age, dating to a time when the principal emphasis was on herbs for cooking, medicine, to disguise

unpleasant odors, and, for some, their astrological significance—unhappily, an aspect not elaborated on by Ms Hobhouse. The Trust places great emphasis on the historical accuracy of plants, the site and age of each property they adorn, and also on each garden's proper soil. At one property, "300 tonnes" were dug out and replaced.

Among the valuable appendices, six pages are devoted to a chart indicating what features exist at what gardens. Studying the chart will assist visitors interested in viewing certain specialties. Topiary plantings, for instance, adorn about one-third of the properties. Maze devotees, on the other hand, can locate only three in which to get lost.

Reviewed by Jane Field Alexander

THE NEW TERRACOTTA GARDENER

Jim Keeling

North Pomfret, VT, Trafalgar Square, 1995, 176 pages, 117 color photos, 15 b&w illustrations, 9" x 11 1/4", hardcover, \$29.95

This is an expanded edition of the book published in 1990. Jim Keeling is the founder of Whichford Pottery of Warwickshire, England. Not only is he a keen gardener and a master potter, but he studied archaeology and history at Cambridge University.

Anyone who loves container gardening will enjoy the history of flower pots and terracotta, a fairly porous type of earthenware. Pot making is a tradition stretching back to the dawn of recorded time that has remained remarkably unchanged.

The pictures are good and the mixing of plants in containers is explained. The examples could be a guide for container-gardeners with limited space. The plants are botanically identified, too. The book was written in England where the climate is very different from Southern California. The pots shown are in English gardens. The book is readable and interesting.

Reviewed by Barbara S. Jones.

MAGIC MUCK: The Complete Guide to Compost

Lady Muck (Jane Down)

North Pomfret, VT, Trafalgar Square, 1994, 104 pages, black and white drawings by Tim Coath, 5 1/4" x 8 1/2", hardcover, \$17.95

Lady Muck started out as a bored young woman looking for employment that would get her out of a desk job. Her father, a Somerset farmer, offered her the challenge of getting rid of the pollution problems created by too much muck around the dairy farm. Somewhat dubiously, Jane started making compost. Making it was easy—marketing it was a bit trickier, hence Jane ended up wearing flower and vegetable bedecked hats and toting worms and muck with her as she built her reputation as "Lady Muck."

This amusing book does a great job of explaining the origins of soil and the nitty-gritty of compost making and vermiculture. Chapter titles include "Composting Your Way to Health," "Shovelling the Proverbial," and "The Early Compost Maker Catches the Worm." Most intriguing, however, are the historical origins of blood meal (bloody battlefields yielded the best crops the following years) and bone meal (I wouldn't want to spoil the secret for you). She also explains why you should be naked when you plant your turnips and tells you more than you wanted to know about Japanese worm pie.

Reviewed by Connie Beck

DUMP YOUR STRESS IN THE COMPOST PILE! 1994

THIRTY PLANTS THAT CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE! 1993

Douglas Schar

Washington, D. C. Elliott and Clark Publishing, appr.140 pages, 5 1/4" x 9", softcover, \$12.95 each

These two books by Douglas Schar are written in the same popular, conversational style, and both of them deal with gardening as therapy. Both are handy-format paperbacks; an interesting difference is that *Thirty Plants* uses seventeenth century woodcuts as illustrations while *Stress* contains cartoon drawings, thus contrasting the age-old concept of herbal medicine with the modern problem of stress therapy.

To produce *Thirty Plants* Douglas Schar searched several hundred herbs from all over the world. The thirty names most often found were entered in his computer, and the result was this alphabetical plant list. Each plant is fully described and its medicinal uses and effects are given in detail. There are recipes added to each section. In his introduction the author asserts that modern doctors are usually indifferent to tonics, and he makes some plausible arguments for a return to this basic form of health care.

Dump Your Stress begins with a discussion of the nature of this problem, including a list of fifty symptoms. The author states firmly that gardening is an ideal therapeutic treatment, and he presents a list of seven garden styles to give readers some choices. Tonic and scent garden are added to the more usual flower, fruit, and vegetable patterns. Recipes appear in appropriate places throughout the text, and there is a set of stress-exercises at the end of each chapter. These last, if done properly, would retire many bottles of pills.

Each of these lively books would stand alone as a useful title; added together they make a significant contribution to the literature of gardening as therapy.

Reviewed by Elsie M. Topham

THE POND DOCTOR

Helen Nash

New York, Dist. by Sterling Publishing, 1994, 160 pages, 205 color photos, 8 1/4" x 10 1/4", hardcover, \$24.95

This is a must read for those who are contemplating the building of a pond, fountain, or any water works. Just the construction part is very informative and honest about the types of design. One chapter is devoted to pesky algae and one to water quality, which are the basics to a healthy pond. I know of no other book that has devoted a whole chapter to safety. The author has covered all her bases.

The pictures and explanations of plants, pests, etc. tend to relate to larger water gardens than will be found in our local area, but many of the pests remain the same. The plants are harder here and the pictures in this book are good enough to make one's mouth water. Talk of winter for Canadian gardens is very foreign but interesting since we have none of these problems. Many plants she calls annuals are perennials for us.

This book should be read before you start a water garden to avoid some common pitfalls. Save yourself time and money of having to repair your water garden by applying the practical advice contained here in this wonderful book, remembering an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Reviewed by Kathy Walsh

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17. Editor, *Jacqueline Coleman*

Date 10/19/95

SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION
BUS TOURS

A tour in November doesn't have a date set
as yet. The tour will be to Historic Redlands,
mansions and gardens; and to apple growing
Oak Glen.

A tour on December 12th will be to holiday
decorated Adamson House and Gardens, in
Malibu.

Call 619/277-5004, after 7:00P.M. for
further information.

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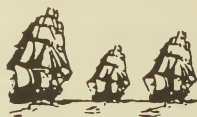
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LJ

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